
VIEWS LETTER

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AWD's Views, News & Other Things of Interest

September & October 2002

Why Character Counts

Without it you'll never truly succeed

By STEPHEN R. COVEY

SOME TIME AGO I was asked to consult for a bank that was having a problem with employee morale. "I don't know what's wrong," bemoaned their young president. Bright and charismatic, he'd risen through the ranks only to see his institution faltering. Productivity and profits were down. He blamed his employees. "No matter what incentives I provide," he said, "they won't shake off this gloom and doom."

He was right. The atmosphere seemed poisoned with suspicion and lack of trust. For two months I ran workshops, but nothing helped. I was stumped.

"How can anyone trust what's happening here?" was a typical refrain of employees. But no one would tell me the source of this distrust.

Finally, in more casual conversations, the truth emerged. The boss, who was married, was having an affair with an employee. And everyone knew it.

It was obvious now that the company's poor performance was caused by his conduct. But the greatest damage this man was doing was to himself. He was thinking only of his own gratification, disregarding long-term consequences. Moreover, he had violated a sacred trust with his wife.

In a word, his failing was one of *character*.

What Really Matters

Today it is out of vogue to speak in terms of

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Arming Pilots a Necessary Anti-Terrorist Measure

By Dennis Jackson

As a captain for a major U.S. airline and a proponent of firearms for pilots, I am responding to the May 5 Tribune editorial calling for armed pilots. Most of the opponents of arming pilots cite reasons that are founded in myth, speculation and misconceptions.

The plan to arm flight deck crews involves many facets. Foremost, not all pilots will be armed and the ones that are will be fully trained, investigated and deputized as federal officers.

Pilots will be trained and forbidden from going into the cabin with a firearm to assist the cabin crew with disturbances. This will prevent the firearm from falling into the wrong hands.

An armed pilot will use his firearm to prevent criminal access to the flight deck - only! The dangers of a negligent discharge and harm to an innocent passenger are overstated. The architecture of the flight deck ensures that if the pilot is required to shoot a terrorist from the flight deck the round will be discharged upward and not in an even plane with the passengers.

Law enforcement standards suggest that if an innocent person is killed or injured by a stray bullet, the collateral damage is acceptable if it prevents a tragedy similar to Sept. 11. Since Sept. 11 there have been numerous breaches of security with deadly weapons, including firearms. And some of these firearms have even made it onboard aircraft!

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When one who is honestly mistaken hears the truth, they will either quit being mistaken or cease to be honest. - Unknown

ARMING PILOTS, *continued from page 1.*

To leave the flight deck unprotected by not arming pilots is foolhardy in this global environment. Not to mention the risk from the ever present criminal element.

The major opponents of armed pilots are terrorists, airline management and the Bush administration. More than 80 percent of the American public favors this level of protection. And since the administration has indicated that we are living on borrowed time for another Sept. 11 style attack, not acting on this doesn't make sense.

The argument for less-than-lethal weapons has taken root because of those who fear guns more than they fear terrorism. Even though most law enforcement jurisdictions train their officers with stun guns, law enforcement is the first to admit that stun guns should never be used against deadly force unless you can back up the stun gun with deadly force, as well.

When you have a team of trained and determined terrorists trying to take control of a huge guided missile, you have an immediate need to apply deadly force. The suggestion to use "star wars" technology is not founded in good sense.

There is no technology that puts up a protective barrier around buildings that prevents airplanes from running into them. The use of "sleeping gas" is equally misguided in the fact that the cabin crew would also be incapacitated if it is inserted into the cabin in flight.

Why would you want to rely on technology that is nonexistent, unproven or years away - especially when law enforcement has used firearms effectively for decades to prevent crime and save innocent lives?

Long before Sept. 11 and gun control, pilots were required to carry firearms by the U.S. Postal service. During the 1970s some pilots were trained to carry firearms on duty to prevent

hijackings. Is the risk less today?

Up until December 1987 pilots were allowed to bypass security and some pilots carried firearms without their airline even knowing about it. No one has ever been hurt because a pilot was armed. However, in 1954 an armed pilot prevented an armed passenger from hijacking his aircraft.

Pilots are some of the most stable persons in our society, and are the most professionally scrutinized and have the ability and training to deal with multiple emergencies that affect the lives of hundreds of people per day. Pilots are proven to be trainable to law enforcement standards with firearms and judgment.

Right now aircraft, and especially flight decks, are soft targets for terrorists. The most effective way to counter the threat is to harden the target by arming pilots. There is no other way.

Even with a mandate from Congress, President Bush has been indecisive on this issue. Concerned Americans should call the White House comment line at (202) 456-1111 and tell President Bush you want him to act on arming pilots.

If not, an armed F-16 is always standing by to shoot down the aircraft that you may very well be riding on.

It is now September 2002 and this was written in early May, but because the government is slow and inattentive to real needs I doubt that there will STILL be anything done to make air travel any more safe than before September 11, 2001. Oh, there will be a large load of manure passed from congressman to congressman, and from senator to senator, and from the president to the American people but it will do little to fertilize anything other than the politician's political positions. It will just be more political rhetoric, as empty as the oaths they recited when being sworn in——when they swore that they would uphold and protect the Constitution of the United States.

We are in **desperate need of COMMON SENSE.** *Comment by ~ AWD ~*

Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can.

Character *Continued from page 1.*

character. But there is no more essential aspect of any person.

Character is made up of those principles and values that give your life direction, meaning and depth. These constitute your inner sense of what's right and wrong based not on laws or rules of conduct but on *who you are*. They include such traits as integrity, honesty, courage, fairness and generosity—which arise from the hard choices we have to make in life. So, wrong is simply in doing wrong, not in getting caught.

Yet some people wonder if our inner values matter anymore. After all, hasn't our noted bank executive succeeded in every visible way despite his transgressions?

This question demonstrates a quandary of our modern life. Many have come to believe that the only things we need for success are talent, energy and personality. But history has taught us that over the long haul, who we are is more important than who we appear to be.

During the nation's first century and a half, almost everything in the literature of success and self-help focused on what could be called the character ethic. Such eminent figures as Benjamin Franklin and Thomas Jefferson made clear their belief that we can only experience true success and happiness by making character the bedrock of our lives.

After we moved into the industrial age and after World War I, the basic view of success shifted to what we could call the personality ethic. Success became more a function of charm, skills and techniques that, at least on the surface, lubricate the process of human interaction. Rather than struggle with thorny issues of right and wrong, we turned to making things run smoothly.

Some of that philosophy expressed itself with harmless but superficial maxims such as "smiling wins more friends than frowning." Other ideas were clearly manipulative or even deceptive-faking interest in others' hobbies so they will like you, for instance.

With a value system based solely on skill and personality, we find heroes in athletes, musicians and

in powerful business executives. But despite the admiration we feel for these achievers, we shouldn't necessarily look upon them as role models. While skill is certainly needed for success, it can never guarantee happiness and fulfillment. These come from developing character.

From the Inside-Out

You can begin to build character at any age. The key is learning how to look within—to work *inside-out*.

With the inside-out approach, private victories precede public victories. These private victories are simply promises you make to yourself and others and then keep. They don't have to be profound or life altering, like a career change. They can be as mundane as a commitment to exercise every day.

A promise like this may sound inconsequential, but it represents the hard choices we face in everyday life. The first step toward building character is to tackle a hard choice, commit to change and stay with it.

Day by day, as you make and keep increasingly challenging promises, you will be making deposits in your "character account." What begins as a great effort will eventually become habit. And as you get into the habit of building character in the smaller areas of your life, your ability to develop character strength in more important spheres will grow.

Private victories, therefore, lead to our larger public victories. For instance, to gain more latitude in your job, you must first be a more responsible employee. To create a happy marriage, first be the kind of person who generates love, generosity, dependability and trust.

There's no more essential ingredients for character growth than trust. Whether it's trust we earn from colleagues or a spouse, it is built slowly over time in an infinite variety of circumstances.

One of the most commonly overlooked ways to build trust is to be loyal to those who are not present. Suppose you and I were criticizing our boss behind his back. What will happen if you and I later have a

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"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and what never will be. The functionaries of every government have propensities to command at will the liberty and property of their constituents. There is no safe deposit for these but with the people

Character, continued from page 3

falling out? You know my nature—I'll bad-mouth you. You've seen me do it.

Now suppose you were to start criticizing the boss, and I suggest we go to him and explore how things might be improved. You'd likely assume that I'd act with equal respect if someone were to criticize you.

Start at Home

Another way to build character is admit your mistakes. Character is revealed in how we handle things that go wrong.

Years ago I had to choose someone to organize a huge meeting. I gave an untested employee a chance, and he bombed it big time. "It was all my fault," he told me. "But if you give me another chance, you have no idea how far I'll go to make the next one succeed."

He displayed such courage in admitting his failure that I did give him another chance. And I've never regretted it. He performed so superbly that my estimation of his character was higher than if he'd done it right the first time.

The best opportunities to build character, however, are within our families where we are constantly tested—and are most vulnerable to lapses. True character begins at home.

Often we sense that we can get away with things around those who know us best, who will love us regardless of our conduct. This can end up subverting our character and our relationships. How often have we heard of someone who is a gem of an employee but treats his or her spouse like a piece of the woodwork?

Perhaps even more common is the following scenario: At one seminar, after I'd spoken on the importance of demonstrating character within the family, a man came up and said, "I like what you're saying, but my wife and I just don't have the same feelings for each other that we used to. I guess we don't love each other anymore. What can I do?"

"Love her," I replied.

He looked puzzled. "How do you love when you don't feel love?"

"My friend," I responded, "love is a verb. The feeling of love is the fruit of love. So love your wife. You did it once, you can do it again. Listen.

Empathize. Appreciate. It's your choice. Are you willing to do that?"

Of course, I was asking this man if he was willing to search within himself for the character required to make his marriage work. All our relationships follow the contours of life; they have ups and downs. This is why our families provide critical measure of our character—and the opportunity, again and again, to nurture it.

What became of the bank president who was involved sexually with an employee? When I confided to him I knew of his affair and the effect it was having on his staff, he ran his fingers through his hair. "I know where to begin," he said.

"Is it over?"

He looked me squarely in the eye. "Yes. Absolutely."

"Then begin by talking with your wife," I answered.

He told his wife, who forgave him. Then he called a meeting of his staff and addressed their morale problem. "I've found the cause of the problem," he said. "It is me. I am asking you to give me another chance."

It took time, but eventually employee morale—a sense of openness, optimism and trust—improved. In the end, however, the executive was doing himself the greatest favor. He was finding his own path to character.

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BASIC FLYING RULES:

- 1. Try to stay in the middle of the air.**
- 2. Do not go near the edges of it.**
- 3. The edges of the air can be recognized by the appearances of ground, buildings, sea, trees mountains and interstellar space. It is much more difficult to fly there.**
- 4. Don't fly too slowly, or you will gravitate quickly to the hard lower edge of the air in a rapid spinning motion.**

'I am ashamed of my emptiness,'/ said the Word to the Work. / 'I know how poor I am when I see you,' said the Work to the Word. -Rabindranath Tagore 1861-1941

TAX REFORM

Most elected federal officials, many US government officials, and many of those who are close to those who work and live within the Beltway know what is all too rarely said when tax reform is the subject. It is that members of Congress, and especially the Senate, do not want to reform and simplify the American tax system because they do not believe it is in their political interest to do so. As long as they can keep the system complicated, inscrutable and thousands of pages long, they can hold their ability to add or delete a specific tax break or tax hike over the heads of potential contributors in business, in PACs, (Political Action Committees) and in all sorts of organizations. Why do the makers of luxury boats give money to Congress? Because Congress has the power to levy a new tax on the buyers of luxury boats—that is, the customers of the boat makers. If the system was clean and easily understandable, Congress would lose all power to squeeze campaign money from contributors. (It is because of this that reforms such as the flat tax, which would reduce the entire tax code to a one-page system by which all citizens pay a straight 10, 12, or 14 percent of their income in taxes, never receives much support in the Congress.) \$\$\$

Italicized are changes and additions made by me to make the paragraph more understandable. This Paragraph is taken from "WHEN CHARACTER WAS KING" by Peggy Noonan, a delightful biography of President Ronald Reagan.

The tax system (IRS) that is being used in this country is not fair and is not in any way constitutional. There is a movement underway that will eventually force the politicians in power to make necessary changes. What has been done to the people of America in the past eighty some-odd years is disgraceful. Almost all of us have been terribly deceived. We have been extremely

ignorant of the truth. We have been blessed with so many of God's great blessings that we have become blinded to reality; we want to have our cake and to eat it, too. We regard responsibility as something that is another's task. When the politicians jingle a little pocket change within our hearing, our ears perk up, and we listen with serious attentiveness. We are no more in tune with reality than a goat pulling a cart with a carrot dangled before it. As a people, we seem to be more interested in what we can get for nothing than we are in knowing the truth about the IRS. We have been fooled, and now, the situation is becoming critical. We need to wake up! As Abraham Lincoln so eloquently stated, "You can fool some of the people all of the time and all of the people some of the time, but you can't fool all of the people all of the time."

I am hoping that we the Americans will awaken from our ignorant slumber and start applying pressure and heat to the feet of those that are supposed to represent us. One of the most logical ways to cause useful change is to demand of our Representatives and Senators in Washington that they demolish the Internal Revenue Service. And, to replace the IRS with a tax system that is allowed by our constitution.

Comments by ~ AWD ~ ~ ~ ~ ➔

. . .The greatest evil is not now done in those sordid "dens of crime" that Dickens loved to paint. It is not done even in concentration camps and labor camps. In those we see its final result. But it is conceived and ordered (moved, seconded, carried, and minuted) in clean, carpeted, warmed, and well-lighted offices, by quiet men with white collars and cut fingernails and smooth-shaven cheeks who do not need to raise their voice

*Excerpt from; the Preface of the book:
"SCREWTAPE LETTERS" by C.S. Lewis*

How wonderful it is that nobody need wait a single moment before starting to improve the world!

The Classic Middle Name.

Arrested for murder: Christopher Wayne Davis (Pearl River, Louisiana, November), Jerry Wayne Dean (Jackson County, Kentucky, November), Billy Wayne Cope (Rock Hill, South Carolina, November), Joshua Wayne Andrews (Woodbridge, Virginia, January), Jeffrey Wayne Gorton (Flint, Michigan, February), Timothy Wayne Adams (Houston, Texas, February). Murder Warrant Issued: Jason Wayne Johnson (Comal County, Texas, December). Sentenced for murder: Mark Wayne Campmire (Litchfield, Connecticut, January), Executed for Murder: Randall Wayne Hafdahl (Huntsville, Texas, January), Stephen Wayne Anderson (San Quentin, California, January), Avoided a Murder charge only because he was killed in a shootout with police: Danny Wayne Sand (Brandon, Manitoba, December), Appealed or sought parole: convicted murderers Kenneth Wayne Woodfin (Richmond, Virginia, January), Gary Wayne Sutton (Knoxville, Tennessee, January). 👁👁

A friend sent me this article that he clipped out of the local newspaper in Taipei. In an attached note he wrote, "I'm going to have to keep an eye on you! You don't plan on getting added to this list? Do you?"

For those of you who don't know, my full name is Arnold Wayne Doudney. Ha! Ha!☐

Nuts!

A doctor at an insane asylum decided to take his patients to a baseball game. For weeks in advance, he coached his patients to respond to his commands.

When the day of the game arrived, everything seemed to be going well. As the National Anthem started...the doctor yelled, "Up Nuts" And the patients complied by standing up. After the anthem ...he yelled, "Down Nuts". And they all sat back down in their seats.

After a home run was hit by the home team, the doctor yelled, "Cheer Nuts" and they all broke out into applause and cheered. When the umpire made a

particularly bad call against the star of the home team, the doctor yelled, "Boo Nuts!!!" and they all started booing and cat calling.

Thinking things were going very well...the doctor decided to go get a soda and a hot dog.....leaving his assistant in charge.

When he returned, there was a riot in progress. Finding his assistant, the doctor asked, "What in the world happened?"

The assistant replied, "Well, everything was going just fine until this guy walked by and yelled....

"PEANUTS."



Churches Around the Country

A man in Topeka, Kansas decided to write a book about churches around the country. He started by flying to San Francisco and started working east from there.

Going to a very large church, he began taking photographs and making notes. He spotted a golden telephone on the vestibule wall and was intrigued with a sign which read "\$10,000 a minute."

Seeking out the pastor he asked about the phone and the sign. The Pastor answered that this golden phone is, in fact, a direct line to Heaven and if he pays the price he can talk directly to God. The man thanked the pastor and continued on his way. As he continued to visit churches in Seattle, Atlanta, Greensboro, Chicago, Milwaukee, and all around the United States, he found more phones with the same sign, and the same answer from each pastor.

Finally, he arrived in Texas. Upon entering a church in Ft Worth, behold, he saw the usual golden telephone. But THIS time, the sign read "Calls: 35 cents." Fascinated, he asked to talk to the pastor.

"Reverend, I have been in cities all across the country and in each church I have found this golden telephone and have been told it is a direct line to Heaven and that I could talk to God, but, in the other churches the cost was \$10,000 a minute. Your sign reads 35 cents a call. Why?"

The pastor, smiling benignly, replied, "Son, you're in Texas now.....it's a local call." GOD BLESS TEXAS!



Keep the cards, letters & donations coming. I love hearing from you. Ctc. me at Viewsletter5@aol.com or via snail mail: 1015 West Dorchester Way, Mustang, OK 73064

Letter writing is the only device for combining solitude with good company. -

A Frog Story

A frog goes into a bank and approaches the teller. He can see from her nameplate that her name is Patricia Whack. "Ms. Whack, I'd like to get a \$30,000 loan to take a holiday."

Patty looks at the frog in disbelief and asks his name.

The frog says his name is Kermit Jagger, his dad is Mick Jagger, and that it's okay, because he knows the bank manager.

Patty explains that he will need to secure the loan with some collateral.

The frog says, "Sure. I have this," and produces a tiny porcelain elephant, about half an inch tall - bright pink and perfectly formed.

Very confused, Patty explains that she'll have to consult with the bank manager and disappears into a back office. She finds the manager and says, "There's a frog called Kermit Jagger out there who claims to know you. He wants to borrow \$30,000, and he wants to use this as collateral." She holds up the tiny pink elephant. "I mean, what in the world is this?"

The bank manager looks at her and says...

"It's a knickknack, Patty Whack. Give the frog a loan. His old man's a Rolling Stone."



Comedy keeps the heart sweet.

~ Mark Twain ~

President Ronald Reagan Wrote:

Early in his presidency, President Ronald Reagan, wrote a hand written letter to Leonid Brezhnev, the Soviet leader at the time. Below is a paragraph from that letter:

"When World War II ended, the United States had the only undamaged industrial power in the world. Our military might was at its peak—and we alone had the ultimate weapon, the nuclear weapon with the unquestioned ability to deliver it anywhere in the world. If we had sought world

domination then, who could have opposed us? But the United States followed a different course—one unique in all the history of mankind. We used our power and wealth to rebuild the war ravaged economies of the world including those nations who had been our enemies. . . ."

When I first read this letter it dawned on me how ignorant and stupid most of the world (including many Americans) must be when it comes to looking at what America has been and should always be. (I say "should always be" because we are becoming so much less than we once were.)

America is great because her people are great. She is good because her people are good. She has been a responsible nation because her people were a responsible people. America knew right from wrong because her people used God's law to measure themselves. America's work was honorable because they relied on Providence to show them the task. The people did their best, with much shed blood and many lost lives, with God as their guide and strength.

How can we as a great nation ever expect to continue without applying the very principles that has elevated us to our greatness?

How much defeat must we endure before we realize that along with liberty and freedom there is responsibility? We are dangerously close to a point where those in power will be out of control, and we will—then—be at their mercy. How long must we continue this present course before the Almighty finally pulls the rug out, and we realize once again, that we are totally dependent upon His grace and goodness to save us? ~ AWD ~

Big News Around Town.

By Shelby Doudney Schnauzer Dog.

On July 6, 2002, Andy and L'Lana said their marriage vows and became one.

Now, what do I have to say about all of this? Who can say? I'm just a Schnauzer Dog. What do I know about the goings on of this young man who has long since moved away from home? The two remaining here have been united for the

*Continued on page 8, See **Big News***

Big News, *Continued from page 7.*

past nearly 29 years, and they seem to be getting along better than ever.

The fact that neither of Andy's parents showed up for the wedding may look bad to some, but I don't think that it is all that bad, and hopefully there are no hard feelings. The boss always said that when two people want to get married they ought to do just that—get married. The belief around here is that if they want to say their marriage vows while freefalling from a perfectly good airplane or on the moon or in Jamaica, it is their choice. And, if we choose not to jump from the airplane or make lunar landings or go to Jamaica in order to witness the event, then there should be no feelings of indifference in one direction or the other. If I were to say anymore than this, I would be guilty of trying to be politically correct. And, I agree with the boss that being politically correct is no more than shading the truth with dishonest politeness.

The facts are that Andy and L'Lana have tied the knot for better or for worse, and all of us around here hope it is for the best. We feel that it will be the best. They have as good a chance as the next couple of making that union last a full lifetime and be a rich experience.

One thing that Master Andrew hopefully realizes is that and I quote (Diane Sollee): "Any fool can have a trophy wife. It takes a real man to have a trophy marriage." Another thing that the couple might take into consideration is a quote by Dr. Frank Pittman MD: "Marriage isn't supposed to make you happy—it's supposed to make you married."

Compatibility is always mentioned when marriage is considered, but consider this: "What counts in making a happy marriage is not so much how compatible you are, but how you deal with incompatibility." — Leo Tolstoy

It has been asked, "Is there anything more beautiful in life than a young couple clasping hands and pure hearts in the path of marriage? Can there be anything more beautiful than young love?" And the answer is given, "Yes, there is a more beautiful thing. It is the spectacle of an old

man and an old woman finishing their journey together on that path. Their hands are gnarled, but still clasped; their faces are seamed, but still radiant; their hearts are physically bowed and tired, but still strong with love and devotion for one another. Yes, there is a more beautiful thing than young love. Old love.

Robert Louis Stevenson has said that "Marriage is one long conversation, checkered with disputes." And, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, writing to a young bride and groom from his prison cell in Nazi, Germany, in 1943 wrote, "It is not your love that sustains the marriage, but from now on, the marriage that sustains your love." Being the Schnauzer Dog that I am, I have a vivid understanding of honor. The oath of marriage is a serious commitment and should be defended with all resources even until death, not an act of murder by any means, but the hanging in there until death separates them. Another thing that I might remind this newly wedded couple is from the scripture found in I Corinthians Chapter Thirteen, Verse Seven: Love never gives up, never loses faith, is always hopeful, and endures through every circumstance. Finally, I am reminded of one of the Boss's favorite sayings: "Love and Sacrifice are synonyms. You won't find one without the other. If one of the elements is missing the other will not be found."

Now that this has been said, I wish the best for all the young people starting out on this great adventure called matrimony. In the words of the great American writer and poet, Robert Service, "Carry on, Carry on"



*Take a music bath once or twice
a week for a few seasons, and
you will find that it is to the
soul what the water bath is to
the body.*

- Oliver Wendell Holmes, Jr., US Supreme

Extraordinary Moment of Grace

A story is told about Fiorello LaGuardia, who, when he was mayor of New York City during the worst days of the Great Depression and all of World War II, was called by adoring New Yorkers 'the Little Flower' because he was only five foot four and always wore a carnation in his lapel. He was a colorful character who used to ride the New York fire trucks, raid speakeasies with the police department, take entire orphanages to baseball games, and whenever the New York newspapers were on strike, he would go on the radio and read the Sunday funnies to the kids.

One bitterly cold night in January of 1935, the mayor turned up at a night court that served the poorest ward of the city. LaGuardia dismissed the judge for the evening and took over the bench himself. Within a few minutes, a tattered old woman was brought before him charged with stealing a loaf of bread. She told LaGuardia that her daughter's husband had deserted her, her daughter was sick, and her two grandchildren were starving. But the shopkeeper, from whom the bread was stolen, refused to drop the charges. "It's a bad neighborhood, your Honor," the man told the mayor. "She's got to be punished to teach other people around here a lesson."

LaGuardia sighed. He turned to the woman and said, "I've got to punish you. The law makes no exceptions—ten dollars or ten days in jail." But even as he pronounced sentence, the mayor was already reaching into his pocket. He extracted a bill and tossed into his famous sombrero saying; "Here is the ten dollar fine which I now remit; and furthermore, I am going to fine everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a person has to steal bread so that her grandchildren can eat. Mr. Bailiff, collect the fines and give them to the defendant."

So the following day, the New York City newspapers reported that \$47.50 was turned over to the bewildered old lady who had stolen a loaf of bread to feed her starving grandchildren, fifty

cents of that amount being contributed by the red-faced grocery store owner, while some seventy petty criminals, people with traffic violations, and New York City policemen, each of whom had just paid fifty cents for the privilege of doing so, gave the mayor a standing ovation.

What an extraordinary moment of grace for anyone present in that courtroom! The grace of God operates at a profound level in the life of a loving person. Oh, that we would recognize God's grace when it comes to us!

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Excerpt from Ragamuffin Gospel by Brennan Manning (The title to this excerpt is my contribution ~AWD~)

Another one for our "great" ex-Pres and our "free speech" media

Subject: Mohammed Atta

In case you don't know, terrorist pilot Mohammad Atta blew up a bus in Israel in 1986. The Israelis captured, tried and imprisoned him.

As part of the Oslo agreement with the Palestinians in 1993, Israel had to agree to release so-called "political prisoners." However, the Israelis would not release any with blood on their hands.

The American President at the time, Bill Clinton, and his Secretary of State, Warren Christopher, "insisted" that all prisoners be released. Thus, Mohammad Atta was freed and eventually thanked the US by flying an airplane into Tower One of the World Trade Center.

This was reported by many of the American TV networks at the time that the terrorists were first identified. It was censored in the US from all later reports.

†

**Those who have the disease called
Jesus will never be cured.
-Old Russian proverb**

Forgiveness

Perhaps you've heard the story: Four years ago in a large city in the far West, rumors spread that a certain Catholic woman was having visions of Jesus. The reports reached the archbishop. He decided to check her out. There is always a fine line between the authentic mystic and the lunatic fringe.

"Is it true, M'am, that you have visions of Jesus?" asked the cleric.

"Yes," the woman replied simply.

"Well, the next time you have a vision, I want you to ask Jesus to tell you the sins that I confessed in my last confession."

The woman was stunned. "Did I hear you right, bishop? You actually want me to ask Jesus to tell me the sins of your past?"

"Exactly. Please call me if anything happens."

Ten days later the woman notified her spiritual leader of a recent apparition. "Please come," she said.

Within the hour the archbishop arrived. He trusted eye-to-eye contact. "You just told me on the telephone that you actually had a vision of Jesus. Did you do what I asked?"

"Yes, bishop, I asked Jesus to tell me the sins you confessed in your last confession."

The bishop leaned forward with anticipation. His eyes narrowed.

"What did Jesus say?"

She took his hand and gazed deep into his eyes. "Bishop" she said, "these are his exact words: 'I CAN'T REMEMBER.'"

Another excerpt from *The Ragamuffin Gospel*

~by Brennan Manning †

RIDDLE

The man who made it didn't need it.
The man who bought it didn't use it.
The man who used it didn't know it.

What is it?

If

by: *Rudyard Kipling*

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or, being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or, being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise;

If you can dream - and not make dreams your master;
If you can think - and not make thoughts your aim;
If you can meet with triumph and disaster
And treat those two imposters just the same;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with wornout tools;

If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss,
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them: "Hold on";

If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with kings - nor lose the common touch;
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you;
If all men count with you, but none too much;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run -
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And - which is more - you'll be a Man my son!



This poem by Rudyard Kipling is enjoyed best when read aloud.

Lord Jesus, don't let me lie when
I say that I love you and
protect me, for today I could
betray you. —St. Augustine